

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-5 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 2,776,996 to Hunt *et al.* (“Hunt ‘996”) in view of GB 1,166,961 (“GB ‘961”).

Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 1 presently recites that a basic compound is used in an amount of about 0.3 mol or less per mol of an acidic compound.

Hunt ‘996 teaches “the quantity of acid may be kept down to less than stoichiometric (say to about 0.8 equivalent or less) compared to the quantity of base employed, throughout the reaction period.” *See*, col. 2, lines 27-33. As described in Applicants’ Response under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 dated December 7, 2005, Example 1 of GB ‘961 teaches that pyridine is used in an amount of 0.51 mol per mol of acetic acid.

Applicants respectfully submit that both Hunt ‘996 and GB ‘961 fail to teach that a basic compound is used in an amount of about 0.3 mol or less per mol of an acidic compound. Hunt ‘996 teaches that the amount of acid is less than the quantity of base. GB ‘961 also fails to teach that the amount of base is 0.3 mol or less per mol of an acidic compound, as it teaches that the amount of pyridine is 0.51 mol per mol of acetic acid. As such, Hunt ‘996 and GB ‘961 are both deficient in that both Hunt ‘996 and GB ‘961 fail to teach that a basic compound is used in an amount of about 0.3 mol or less per mol of an acidic compound.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

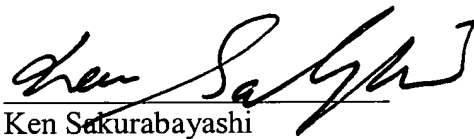
RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)  
U.S. Application No.: 10/665,006

Attorney Docket No: Q77349

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Ken Sakurabayashi  
Registration No. 58,490

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC  
Telephone: (202) 293-7060  
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

**23373**

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: September 28, 2006